

Testimony of [Curtis Darragh IV]
[2021 CT School Counselor of the Year: Danbury Schools
in opposition of
S.B. 1095 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS
Education Committee - **March 1, 2023**

Representative Currey, Senator McCrory, Representative McCarty, Senator Berthel, Vice Chair Leeper, Vice Chair Winfield and esteemed members of the Education Committee, my name is Curtis Darragh IV and I am a School Counselor in the Danbury Public Schools and Board Member, for the CT School Counseling Association]. Thank you for the opportunity to offer **testimony in opposition of Senate Bill 1095 - AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS.**

This bill has certain language speaks on behalf of what student services are going to do along with **Senate Bill 1095 adds that (ii) that individuals who are school counselors, social workers, psychologists, aides or other staff members and have appropriate training and ongoing supports may be assigned the duties of a school resource officer.**

This bill is a conflict for school counselors because school counselors in the state of Connecticut are already overworked with high caseloads and many responsibilities, servicing academic, social-emotional and college/career readiness. School Resource officers are definitely needed in schools, but our roles are completely different in how we are servicing the school, building relationships with students and addressing student behaviors. The CT school counseling association has a framework that was created in 2020 for districts to adopt, and how to delegate tasks to the school counselors in their building. The wording in this bill needs clarification on what is meant by “assigned duties of a school resource officer” School Counselors are trained in a variety of counseling skills and student rapport; The bill that this is proposing needs to also have this kind of language as well.

The language in this bill is just an overall direct conflict to the role of a school counselor. We (school counselors) should not be doing the work of a school resource officer and vice versa. School counselors are already stretched too thin in a post-covid environment; especially since we are seeing an uptick in mental health such as cutting, depression and anxiety. This simply does not allow us to meet with all students on our caseloads. My caseload is 375:1, and I am already stretched far too thin. This school year alone, I have been by myself because my school cannot fill in another school counselor. So I currently have 750:1.

I would just ask that you modify this bill. School counselors should not be doing the work of a school resource officer as it is in direct conflict with the work and the role of a school counselor.

Thank you so much for your time,
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